

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 24, 2002

Administrator Christine Todd Whitman  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Ariel Rios Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Whitman:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the re-evaluation of the New Source Review standards for power plants and other industrial facilities. Because we are concerned about possible impacts on the health of our constituents and environment, we urge you not to relax these standards.

The Northeast states have made a commitment to simultaneously improving air quality and securing a reliable energy supply by pursuing a balanced mix of supply and demand options, maintaining high environmental standards and promoting advanced, clean technologies. Several states in the region have adopted multi-pollutant regulations that have helped shape the national debate, and the region has adopted a mercury action plan that goes beyond federal obligations. We in the Northeast are doing our utmost to provide both reliable energy and a healthy environment for our citizens.

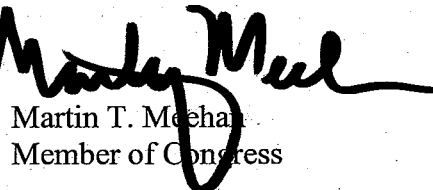
However, our states' regulations are not enough. Prevailing wind patterns carry pollution from Midwest power plants to the Northeast, jeopardizing our attempts to protect public and environmental health. Acid rain has caused immense destruction to the forests and lakes of the Northeast. Last year an article in *BioScience* reported that important soil nutrients have declined by 50% over the past decade and that 41% of Adirondack lakes and 15% of New England lakes exhibit acidification. Today Northeastern forests and lakes are recovering somewhat, but continued strong federal regulations of harmful air pollutants are essential for protecting our states from the devastating effects of acid rain.

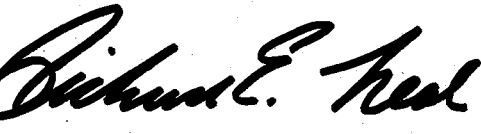
We would also like to emphasize the impact of air pollution on public health. Air pollution has long been linked with the exacerbation of health problems, such as asthma. According to the Centers for Disease Control, each year in the United States outdoor air pollutants contribute to an estimated 50,000 to 120,000 premature deaths and \$40 to \$50 billion worth of health care costs. A recent study in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care* demonstrates that ambient air pollution exposure inhibits children's lung development as much as if they were active smokers. The Northeastern states are committed to protecting the health of our region's children, but in order to succeed we require tough federal standards to protect them from harmful air pollution in areas beyond our jurisdiction.

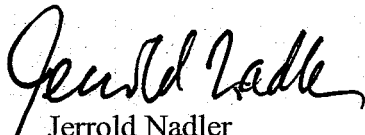
This past July at a Boston conference to discuss the air quality outlook for the Northeast, you said, "We can meet America's energy needs and we can meet our sacred obligations as stewards of the environment. They are not mutually exclusive goals. We are not faced with an 'either-or' choice." We agree. We therefore request that you allow the Northeast to meet its energy needs without sacrificing the health of the public or the environment by maintaining – not weakening – rigorous clean-air standards for power plants and other industrial facilities throughout the nation.


Sincerely,


  
Edward J. Markey  
Member of Congress

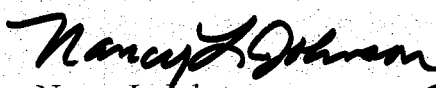
  
Martin T. Meehan  
Member of Congress

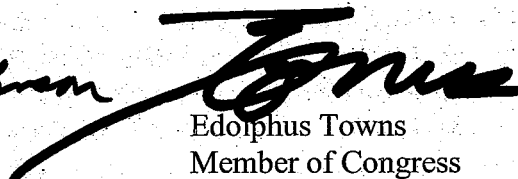
  
Richard E. Neal  
Member of Congress

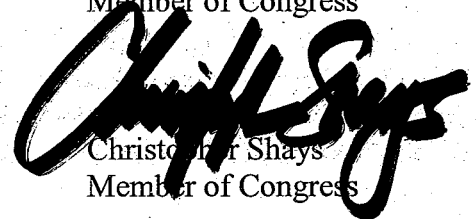
  
Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress

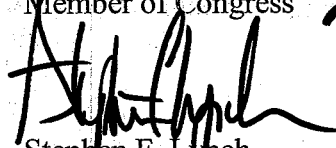
  
Frank Pallone  
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Rosa DeLauro  
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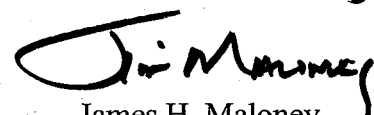
  
Nancy L. Johnson  
Member of Congress

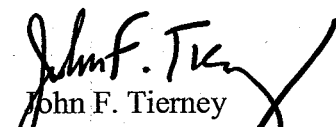
  
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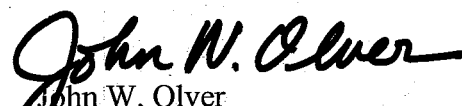
  
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James H. Maloney  
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John F. Tierney  
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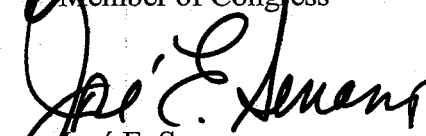
  
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Member of Congress

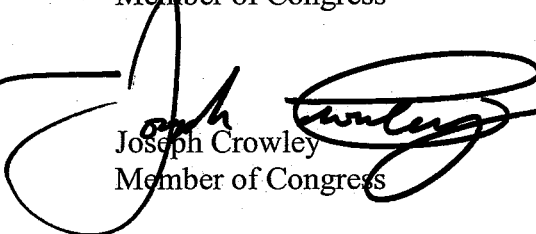
  
Elijah E. Cummings  
Member of Congress

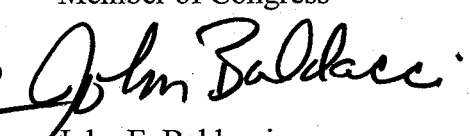
  
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José E. Serrano  
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Joseph Crowley  
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John E. Baldacci  
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*Michael E. Caputo*

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*Barney Frank*

Barney Frank  
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*Nydia Velázquez*

Nydia Velázquez  
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*Rob Simmons*

Rob Simmons  
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*John B. Larson*

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*Constance A. Morella*

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Donald M. Payne  
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*Rush Holt*

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*Jim Saxton*

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*Robert Menéndez*

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*Steven R. Rothman*

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*Maurice D. Hinchey*

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*Ben Cardin*

Benjamin L. Cardin  
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*Charles B. Rangel*

Charles B. Rangel  
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*Robert E. Andrews*


Robert E. Andrews  
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*Steven Israel*

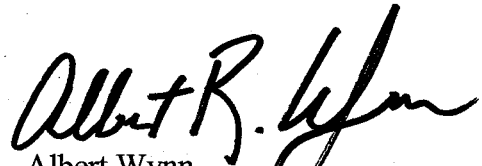
Steven Israel  
Member of Congress

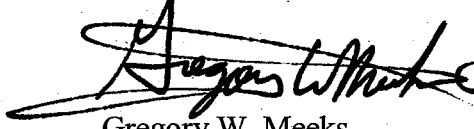
Cc: President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20500


Secretary Spencer Abraham  
Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20585

  
Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress

  
Marge Roukema  
Member of Congress

  
Albert Wynn  
Member of Congress

  
Gregory W. Meeks  
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Major Owens  
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